What is so special about this sermon?

Those who know Arabic or can at least read the Qur'anic script will appreciate that certain letters of the Arabic alphabet have dots associated with them. These letters are listed below and are used all the time in Arabic speech and written texts.

ش ب ت ن ض ث ق ف غ خ ج ز ظ ذ ي

To create any written script of any meaningful nature, without using any of these letters, is a difficult task. To deliver such a sermon without prior preparation, as Imam 'Ali (a) is known to have done with all his sermons, is truly amazing!
[**Note**: The letter representing *taa marbutah* used to be written without dots in early Arabic script]

Are there any other such sermons?

Imam 'Ali (a) once delivered another beautiful sermon which was without the letter *alif* !!

This letter of the Arabic alphabet is undoubtedly the most commonly occurring character in the language. If composing a few meaningful sentences without dots is hard enough, how about delivering a sermon, one which is full of wisdom and which is many times the size of the one you have just seen, but without ever using a single *alif* !!

This sermon is usually called *al-Khutbah al-Muniqah* and is recorded by many Muslim scholars. Amongst the Sunni scholars who quote it can be mentioned:

- Muhammad b. Muslim al-Shafi'i, *Kifayat al-Talib*, p. 248
- Ibn Abi'l Hadid al-Mu'tazili, *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah*, vol. 19, p. 140

How could Imam 'Ali (a) accomplish such a feat?

Imam 'Ali (a) derived his vast knowledge and striking eloquence by virtue of his long and close association with the Prophet Muhammad (s). The Prophet (s), with Divine inspiration, was the source of all such knowledge and wisdom and a teacher par excellence for Imam 'Ali (a).

To find out more about authentic Islam, as taught by Prophet Muhammad (s) and as explained by Imam 'Ali (a) after him, visit:

http://al-islam.org/faq/

v1.0

The Prophet Muhammad (s) said:

I am the house of wisdom and 'Ali is its door

(*Sahih al-Tirmidhi*, (Cairo edition), Kitab al-Manaqib, vol. 5, p. 637, hadith number 3723)

A Sermon Without Dots

The knowledge, wisdom and eloquence of Imam 'Ali b. Abi Talib (a) is well known among Muslims of all schools of thought. One such example of his mastery over the Arabic language manifested itself in this extempore sermon which, in its written form, is devoid of any dots !!

All praise be to Allah: the praised King, the affectionate Owner, the Fashioner of all who are born, the Recourse for every downtrodden, the Outstretcher of lands, the Establisher of firm mountains, the Sender of rain, the Alleviator of difficulties, the Knower and Perceiver of secrets, the Destroyer of kingdoms and Perisher of possessions, the Renewer of eras and their Repetitor, the Source of all things and their Destination. Widespread is His generosity and sufficient are the layered clouds and the supply of rain. He responds to the one who asks or hopes, giving wide and with abundance.

I praise Him endlessly. I consider Him one as He is considered one by those who turn to Him. Lo ! He is Allah, there is no god for the nations except Him. No one can distort what He set upright and established. He sent Muhammad as the standard-bearer of submission (*Islam*), the leader for the rulers and preventer of their oppression, The crippler of the authorities of *Wudd* and *Sawa`* (two idols). He informed and educated, appointed and perfected. He founded the fundamentals and eased them in. He emphasized the appointed promise (Day of Judgment) and forewarned. Allah has linked him with honor and granted his soul the peace, and may Allah have mercy on his progeny and his venerated family; as long as the guiding stars shine, the crescent continues to rise, and the chant of the oneness (*La ilaha illa Allah*) is made to be heard around.

May God protect ye! Work towards the best of deeds. So tread the path seeking the lawful, and give up the forbidden and abandon it. Listen to the command of Allah and be aware of it. Maintain the ties with relations and nurture them. Disobey desires and repel them. Bond as kins with the righteous and pious, and discontinue the company of amusement and greed.

Your groom is the most impeccable of free men by birth, most generous and honorable with glories, and of the sweetest of descent. Here he came to you, took your kin with permission, in marriage, the gracious bride. Offered a dowry, just as the Messenger of Allah did to Umm Salamah. Certainly, he [s] was the most gracious son-in-law. Kind to his progeny. He gave them in marriage to whom he wanted. He was neither confused in his choice of wife nor had an oversight.

I ask Allah, on your behalf, for the lasting graciousness of His connection. And the continuation of His pleasures, and that He may inspire all: the reform of their own condition, and the preparation for their individual destiny and the hereafter. Gratitude is for Him forever and the praise for His Messenger Ahmad [s].

This sermon appears to have been delivered by Imam 'Ali (a) on the occasion of someone's marriage (*nikah*), and may well have been his own marriage. It has been quoted by several scholars such as:

- Muhammad Rida al-Hakimi, *Saluni qabl an tafqiduni*, vol. 2, pp. 442-3.
- Sayyid al-Musawi, *al-Qatarah min bihar manaqib Aal-Nabi wa al-`Itrah*, vol. 2, p. 179
- Hasun al-Dulafi, *Fada'il Aal al-Rasul*, p. 6

الخطبة العارية عن النقطة للإمام علي (عليه السلام)

الحمد لله الملك المحمود والمالك الودود مصور كل مولود مآل كل مطرود ساطح المهاد وموطد الأوطاد ومرسل الأمطار ومسهل الأوطار عالم الأسرار ومدركها ومدمر الأملاك ومهلكها ومكور الدهور ومكررها ومورد الأمور ومصدرها عم سماحه وكمل ركامه وهمل وطاوع السؤال والأمل أوسع الرمل وأرمل أحمده حمدا ممدودا وأوحده كما وحد الأواه و هو الله لا إله للأمم سواه ولا صادع لما عد له وسواه أرسل محمدا علما للاسلام وإماما للحكام ومسددا للرعاء ومعطل أحكام ود وسواع أعلم وعلم وحكم وأحكم أصل الأصول ومهد وأكد الموعود وأوعد أوصل الله له الاكرام وأودع روحه السلام ورحم آله وأهله الكرام ما لمع رائل وملع دال وطلع هلال وسمع اهلال.

اعملوا رعاكم الله اصلح الأعمال واسلكوا مسالك الحلال واطرحوا الحرام ودعوه واسمعوا أمر الله وعوه وصلوا الأرحام وراعوها وعاصوا الأهواء واردعوها وصاهروا أهل الصلاح والورع وصارموا رهط اللهو والطمع ومصاهركم أطهر الأحرار مولدا وأسراهم سؤددا وأحلاهم موردا وها هو أمكم وحل حرمكم مملكا عروسكم المكرمه وماهر لها كما مهر رسول الله أم سلمه وهو أكرم صهر أودع الأولاد وملك ما أراد وماسها مملكه ولا وهم ولا وكس ملاحمه ولا وصم اسأل الله لكم احماد وصاله ودوام اسعاده وألهم كلا اصلاح حاله والاعداد لمآله ومعاده وله الحمد السرمد والمدح لرسوله أحمد (ص).